1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

Everyone knows where the boundaries lie between village areas, or between hamlets and other settlements, and there is plenty of land for expansion and for the wandering cattle nomads who traverse the area annually moving their cattle north and south with the coming and going of the rains.

The settlements are all made up of walled compounds and within these are the mud-walled houses with conical thatched roofs, or sometimes grass mat walls with thatched roofs. In the northeast of Bornu the people specialize in a bee-hive shaped house of bound thatch which can be picked up and moved and can reach a size of twenty to thirty feet in diameter, although ten to fifteen feet is more common. A compound is almost always rectangular in shape with mud or grass mat walls and internal partitions. There is only one entrance which is often a house with two doors so that there is a shelter at the doorway for people to gather and visit with the household head. The compounds in any settlement are always arranged in a "U"-shape with the open end towards the west and the closed end on the east. The arms of the U then form the north and south sides of the open plaza where all the major events of town take place. Although in very tiny settlements, big cities, or settlements that have lost a great many people, this U-shape is not often easy to discover, it can be seen by simply asking people where they have their central plaza. When this is pointed out, the questioner knows exactly where to look for the house of the senior political leader of the settlement since his household is always at the bottom of the U in the center facing west. Parenthetically, this means that when individuals or groups pray and bow down toward the east in the open plaza, which they often do, they face the doorway of their local political leader's compound.

Around the villages are fields of millet, the major food staple, guinea corn, ground-nuts, the major cash crop, and numerous specialized crops of vegetables or gourds that vary from place to place depending upon local conditions. Almost everybody does a little farming while goods not produced within the household itself are purchased at local weekly markets that dot the countryside in each of the major villages.

In their culture the Kanuri share ideas about religion, social organization, and subsistence patterns with many of the other peoples of the Western Sudan. Even esoteric items such as pre-pubescent boys' hair styles are shared across wide areas of the southern and central Sahara ranging as far away as Morocco. In their patterns of dress—workshirts and long ground-length robes for men, long shirts and saris for women—they again share many items with surrounding peoples as they do in their love of horses which give a man prestige unless he is one of the few in the cities that owns an automobile. Their language, Kanuri, is not related to other languages of Nigeria, but is shared and closely related to a large group of tongues called Central Saharan that ranges from the Tibesti highlands in northern Chad to Bornu in the southwest and the Darfur region in the modern nation of Sudan, in the southeast. It is a graceful language in which the verb comes at the end of the sentence as in Latin and in which there are many polite circumlocutions for saying things diplomatically. Thus if I wish to say a man is untrustworthy, I do not say it outright. Instead I say quietly that he has narrow eyes, which comes from the saying, "A man with narrow eyes has no shame," he lacks proper respect for his obligations to others. There are many greetings which are adjusted to social rank,

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

There are many greetings which are adjusted to social rank, so that one can say "Hello" to a social inferior, to an equal, or to a respected superior, and receive a proper reply recognizing the same distinction. People from other areas of Nigeria and Europeans claim it is a difficult language to learn. But this is probably due to the fact that the most widespread language of Northern Nigeria is Hausa, and many outsiders find they can get along with Hausa in the cities and larger towns without having to make the effort to learn Kanuri. Certainly today most Kanuri school children know some Hausa, and facility with it is spreading throughout all of Northern Nigeria.

Distinctive Kanuri cultural features, things which are of unique Kanuri origin, are not necessarily vitally important things. But they are, if you like, diagnostic features that indicate Bornu-ness in contrast to the cultures of other closely related ethnic groups in the Sudan. Perhaps the most striking feature is the women's hair style. At its most resplendent, it resembles the form of a Trojan helmet made out of an enormous braided ponytail that begins as a crest at the front-center of the head and curves up over the head to end in a slight upward curl of the tail at the back. Today a few of the young school girls are beginning to give up this traditional Kanuri coiffure and are taking on instead the Shuwa-Arab style of a smooth top of the head with hundreds of small braids clinging tightly to the sides and back of the head, at the ends of which are either loose ringlets or a pageboy effect.

Other features which are unique to Bornu are their knives and calabash carvings. These items are also unique to each ethnic group in the region, as are tribal marks cut on the face. Thus many unique features of Kanuri traditional life are thought of locally by many peoples as differentiating criteria for separating one ethnic group from another. A Northern Nigerian going to a market in Jos, or Maiduguri, or Kano, can spot a Kanuri, Fulani, or a Hausa calabash design at a glance just as he can tell another person's ethnic group by his tribal marks, or spot a Bornu knife among a pile of others.

On the other hand, the inside of a Kanuri gentleman's household is not significantly different from the household of a man of similar rank, wealth, occupation, and education, who lives in Hausa country seven or eight hundred miles to the west of Bornu. They dress in a very similar manner, eat very similar food, and share many of the same beliefs and attitudes about what is the best way to live, make decisions, treat one's family, friends, superiors, and worship one's God. Thus although there are some clear-cut diagnostic features representative of Kanuri culture, the people share in a way of life that is practiced by millions in the Sudan, or southern savannah land border of the Sahara desert.

Gathering the Material

I first arrived in Bornu in January 1956 and stayed there until August 1957. My next contacts occurred in the summers of 1964 and again in 1965, and hopefully I shall return in the future to study specialized topics to deepen my understanding of this society as it changes and progresses in the modern world. During our first visit my wife and I spent most of our time in the small village of Magumeri about thirty-three miles northwest of the capital. This was our home base. From here we also visited other parts of the emirate, especially the larger village of

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

this food is given as charity to the older women of the group who have no husbands. Both of these acts, the giving of the food and the sending out of the kola nuts, are said to be the formal announcement of the new baby's birth as well as an invitation to attend the naming ceremony held on the eighth day after birth, that is to say on the same day one week later.

It is worth noting at this point that these precautions are well adapted to the facts of Kanuri life. Infant mortality is extremely common, varying for example between 122 and 240 per thousand in the urban areas where the hospitals have been keeping records. This is especially true of the first few hours and days after birth. One man in Magumeri had only two children alive out of nine born to him and his one wife, and five of these nine had died within the first eight days of life. Although this case is somewhat exceptional, it is not difficult to hear of comparable reports throughout the emirate. The Kanuri see many of these deaths as being the result of someone's or something's (a spirit, for instance) malevolent intentions. Charms and prayers are used and divination by religious leaders is sometimes resorted to because of the insecurity the parents feel over the survival of their newborn infant. Thus the eight-day period before the naming ceremony is a cultural buffer, a cushion that allows for the disappointment and grief associated with the highly possible death of the infant.

The Naming

Early in the morning of the eighth day the formal naming ceremony is performed. As they do for all public gatherings, men and women go separately; the women, in groups formed into single files according to rank, move past the men who are seated on the ground near the entrance to the compound. The ground millet flour and other foods received at this time as gifts allow the wife to prepare her husband's food during her confinement without engaging in a most arduous part of her work—that of grinding the millet into flour. Inside the compound the women sit in front of the mother's hut chatting gaily and coloring their teeth with tobacco flowers and a local plant used specifically for this purpose. The barber and his young assistant or apprentice arrive and cut facemarks on the new-born infant and then remove its uvula. While waiting to carry out this ritual function, the barber and his assistants cut the women's hair free of charge as a mark of the festiveness of the occasion. The women collect some money for the barber which is given to him after the baby has been successfully incised. The ceremony ends when perfume is passed among the women and all assembled dip their fingers in tiny bottles or a glass, then rub the scent over their neck and hands. Many, however, stay on talking and chatting for several hours before drifting back in small groups to their own compounds.

In front of the compound the men sit on mats. On one side of the gate sit the *mallams* (religious practitioners) reading from the Koran. On the other side of the infant's hut are the men of the household sitting in order of seniority with the most senior closest to the door. Next to them are their close friends, relatives, and the highest ranking people in attendance. The rest spread out along the north side of the compound under its front wall and everyone waits for the name to be an-

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

to seniors, first in the household then in the society at large, that is the most important social learning of childhood. Kanuri society is hierarchical. Whether the person is in one compound or another, one social situation or another, there is always one common feature—rank and its determinants, power and authority. By living in several compounds, by seeing authority at work in the community, and by learning to generalize his response to authority, the young child learns to respond easily and gracefully to many combinations of rank and position. His counterpart in western society may be learning how to cope with the intricacies of modern urban technology, but he would certainly be no match for his Kanuri counterpart in the diplomacy necessary in dealing with superiors.

Puberty

Puberty is not an age-grade in the same sense as childhood or adolesence. Yet it deserves some special attention because it is a marker that separates these two life periods and creates a means for very important transitions especially for young girls. Sometime between the age of twelve and fourteen most girls undergo their first marriage. Boys on the other hand begin their adolescence. This is a more carefree time for them than the period of intense training for adulthood that a girl is suddenly confronted with as she moves from childhood into her teenage period and marriage.

However there are no absolutely sharp breaks even for a girl. A newly married young girl is not considered totally grown-up and sometimes she continues to wear her hair in the childhood style. If she divorces during this early period, usually the first three or four years after her first marriage, people often speak of her as *njim suri* or one who is only beginning to become a woman but who has not completed the change-over to full adultlhood.[1] At first the young wife still sees many unmarried childhood friends who will soon be getting married themselves. They visit her when she is confined to the house for varying periods depending upon how secluded her husband wishes his wife to be. Only gradually over the period of the first year or so of marriage does the young girl begin to participate fully as a wife. From the first she cooks food regularly because it is her duty and her right, and as time goes on she is seen more and more in the company of the older, adult women of the compound and the neighborhood. If she is not in total seclusion, like most rural wives, then she can be seen going with the women to the well or the market, and to women's festivities in the village.

Although rare it sometimes happens that a girl misses the opportunity to marry while still in her early teens. Leaving aside the very few girls who go on in school, such cases are rather tragic. The girl is either mentally deficient or a disturbed person, or one who people say has been having love affairs before marriage. In such cases she changes her hair style in her middle to late teens and takes on the role of a single divorced woman seeking a new husband and therefore open to courtship and sexual liaisons with men.

In Magumeri one young girl about fifteen or sixteen who was well de-

[1] Literally *njim suri* means to have seen inside the hut, that is she has been alone with her husband but only seen or glimpsed at the activities of adulthood not really practiced them in full.

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

ried he must decide where he will set up a house. There are three possible alternatives: (a) he can bring his wife into the house of his father or older brother, or patron whoever the superior man might be; (b) he can set up his own compound close by; or (c) he can move further away and become independent or subordinate to someone else. The decision depends upon whether or not the young man is benefiting from the previous relationship, in which case he usually stays in or near the original compound, or whether he believes himself to be suffering from it, in which case he moves or tries to move away, or near to someone more powerful, influential, and economically beneficent with whom he can associate. The decision is often a very complicated one because myriads of other factors enter into it. Thus if there is a large age discrepancy between a younger man and his older brother, and the father is dead, the younger one may feel that his older brother will never treat him as a man but always as a "young boy." Or if there are brothers and some are full (same mother, same father) while some are half (only one parent in common) then the half brothers are less close and are usually linked to different groups of people through their mothers. One young man told me confidentially that he was worried about whether his father would continue to be successful and whether he should not try to use some of his father's powerful connections in Bornu to become the client of a more important person whose position was even more impressive and more secure than that of his own parents. On the other hand many people would speak about leaving home and setting up households on their own or under influential men and never seem to get around to doing it. When asked about this they replied that this was their home, these were their relatives, and whether it was beneficial or not they ought to stay with their kinsfolk. For them blood is thicker than water, that is to say, they feel their roots in a kinship unit must be the eventual determinant of where they spend their lives.

It is these processes of household growth, and associations between households, that underlie the formation of small-scale political units in Kanuri society. The process can best be seen by observing a real life situation. About three miles southwest of Magumeri is the small hamlet of Gworongo (population circa 250–300) which falls within the boundaries of Magumeri village area. Surrounding the hamlet are small bramble-fenced plots of a special crop called *gworongo* which gives the hamlet its name. This plant is used by women as a stimulant and cosmetic along with tobacco flowers. In 1953 one of these farmers, a man named Aji, moved out of the hamlet and set up a compound near his plots of gworongo. He says he wished to be closer to his fields; others gossiped that he had quarreled with the hamlet head of Gworongo over taxes. With him moved his two wives, a younger brother, and the latter's wife, and two unmarried sons. One of these sons left about a year later to go and live in Maiduguri with his father's younger brother. The other son married in 1957 and brought his wife to live in the compound near his father. A stranger to Gworongo hamlet arrived in 1954 and cut a bush farm for himself about one mile to the north of the settlement. He had no wife at the time and asked Aji if he could build a hut near the new settlement and take his meals in Aji's compound. For this hospitality he helped Aji on the *gworongo* plots, prepared household fences, and sometimes gathered grass for Aji's horse. He has since married with both a loan and some gifts from Aji and is now a settled member of the new "community-in-the-becoming." He says that Aji is his *abba njima*, and he is a tada njima or client of the settlement head.

586 587 with ease. Since most men marry a number of times in the course of a normal life, they are likely to marry women who have been married previously and whose earlier marriage (or marriages) has ended in divorce. An important distinction is made between a marriage with a girl who has never been married before, and marriages with women who have been married previously.

585 302 a) Marriage with a virgin. The adult Kanuri woman wears her hair in a striking coiffure which resembles a Trojan helmet. Adolescent girls who have not yet married wear their hair in totally different fashion. Their hair-do is divided into three parts, and they are referred to as kalə yaskə, a term for their particular developmental stage which derives from the hair-do that characterizes the stage. Since very high priority is placed on virginity for a girl before marriage, a first marriage with a kalə yaskə is equivalent to marriage with a virgin.

584 Marriages are frequently arranged, but consent of both boy and girl plays a part, even in marriages in which the boy is marrying for the first time and the girl is a kalə yaskə. A boy may come to his father to say that he likes a particular girl. It frequently happens then that the boy's father will go to the house of the father of the girl, bringing presents with him, to arrange the marriage. The father of the boy may also select a particular girl as wife for his son, ask the boy if he likes the girl, then make the arrangements with the father of the [565] girl. A talaka may marry the daughter of a very good family, if he can raise the money needed for her bride-price. The sole

582 His first marriage frequently is with a kalə yaskə, but this is not always the case.
[587] Many young men of poor families marry a zogor when they marry
[556] for the first time. Since polygamy is permitted, and under Islamic law a man may have as many as four wives, men of important and wealthy families take more than one wife, and prefer to marry a kalə yaskə each time.

885 It was mentioned that the kalə yaskə takes her name from
302 the hair-do worn by girls before maturity. After marriage, with the permission of her young husband, she will have her hair redone according to the style which characterizes an adult woman. Thereafter she is not a kalə yaskə; she takes her place with
586 adults. Should she be divorced by her husband, she would re-
885 turn to the protection of her luwali. She is then eligible for marriage once again, though now she approaches the situation as a grown woman, and of course, one who is not inexperienced in sex.
[587] Attitudes attending the marriage of a kalə yaskə, and much of the ceremony involved, are no longer appropriate when a zogor marries.

586 A woman who becomes a zogor suddenly finds that she has a great deal of freedom in her behavior. Her luwali, or some older friend or relative, provides her with a room in his household,
[535] and men come to court her. She participates in the frequent outdoor dancing in which only zogors take a part since no self-
584 respecting husband would permit his wife to dance publicly. An
587 unmarried man enters into a relationship with a zogor which
[431] ideally should end in their marriage. If he is not already married, he comes to visit the zogor regularly, bringing her presents of clothing and jewelry. It is accepted that a man court-

595 sistent cause of trouble within the household and that he must divorce her. If the situation cannot be remedied, the husband will divorce the wife who is the cause of the difficulty. If there are only two wives in the household and they quarrel, the husband attempts to settle their disputes, though if they continue the husband may divorce one or the other.

593 595 The primary responsibility of the husband is to support his wives and children. The wives in turn cook the food and prepare meals for their husband. Each wife prepares the meals for her husband on the day when it becomes her turn to sleep with him. This task is central to the well-being of a household, and to continued pleasant relations between husband and [581] wife. Among the highest virtues stressed in a future bride are her abilities as a cook. In addition, the wives as a group prepare all the food for other household members, for visitors, and for others who regularly come to eat with a particular house-[252] hold. This frequently requires a great deal of work, particularly in pounding, sifting and grinding millet. The senior wife supervises food preparation of this kind, and distributes tasks to her co-wives which they perform under her direction.

[302] Each week the husband gives his wife market money to buy food for the week, and in addition he gives her a small sum to buy kola nuts (goro) and tobacco buds (<u>fole</u>) which she uses to [431] stain her teeth. If he is a good husband he buys her clothes, and gives her gifts of jewelry. In all these things a husband must treat each wife alike. Each must receive the same amount

[GEIDAM]

632 563 167 turn to their northern villages. A group of Bouzou work at camel transport, and live in a cluster near the slaughter-slab area. Another group of Bouzou work as water-carriers and come [162] to live in Geidam between agricultural seasons. They all, up to thirty in number, live in the compound of Lowan Ashek.

632 621 Lastly a group of pagans are to be found in a small hamlet called Koldi, about 400 yards northwest of the town proper. [162] There are forty-five households in Koldi, with a total popula- [622] tion of 134. Koldi has its own Bulama, but Lowan Ashek serves [651] as the Lowan of Koldi and is responsible for tax collection 632 there. The people of Koldi are largely pagan (kərdi), and mem- 621 563 177 bers of the following tribes are found there: Banana, Kim, Kabam, Ngizim, Kabalia, Mandara, Kotoko, Gwoza and Fulani. Most of these are tribes found east and south of the Shari River, whose people are pagan or partially Islamized. This is the shatter-belt area between the Empires of Bornu and those of [302] Mandara and Bagirmi. The women of Koldi all do their hair in the Kanuri manner, and the people of Koldi are strongly acculturated to the Kanuri. In fact many Kanuri are found living in [771] Koldi. They are characterized primarily by their lax attitude [275] towards Islam, and are considered pagan because they brew millet beer there. No beer is brewed in Geidam proper, so that Kanuri youths wishing to partake of the local brew are forced to slip [534] away unseen to Koldi. Drumming can constantly be heard in the 632 621 evenings from the direction of Koldi. The people of Koldi all [243] have farms of millet in the surrounding area, but in addition [285] [463]

[BEIDAH]

796 [574] spears in salute to him. The crowd then dispersed and people dressed in fine robes visited one another and exchanged greetings. Later that evening horsemen rode once again in salute on the dandal; this time the kabuna were joined by a number of townspeople.

796 574 On the second day of Ngumari Ashembe an enormous feast, attended by about three hundred people, was held at the Ajari at eight in the morning. Some two hundred and fifty people were [563] seated in the outermost courtyard of the Ajari. These included the kabuna, the more important of the Koranic Malams of the town, and a number of the important traders, many of the latter Hausa. In an inner chamber were the thirty-one members of the NA staff. At one end of the inner chamber, on a raised section sat the Ajia along with the Alkali, the Chief Scribe, the Treasurer, a representative of the Shehu, and Malam Jalo. After a time, the group in the inner chamber made up of the NA staff moved to an inner courtyard, split up into six smaller groups, [262] and food was brought out. In the inner courtyard pancakes (senasen) were served, followed by rice bari (porridge), whole roast chickens, and large sections of ram roasted in a hole in [272] the earth. Orange squash was drunk with the meal itself. After [302] the meal, kola nuts were distributed, and after all had washed, [576] perfume was passed around. Lastly, prayers were said, and all rose, said "Allah ngubɔro" (literally meaning, "May Allah prolong your days"--the traditional phrase of deference said to [431] men of higher status) to Yerima, and left. Throughout this time,

On the Friday within the eight-day period, or several days before this if the child is born on a Friday, two or three kola nuts are sent to the males of the town who are friends and relatives of the household, as well as to important persons of the immediate area. This serves as an announcement of the birth of a new member to the household, and as an invitation to the naming ceremony which takes place on the eighth day after birth.

The Naming

On the morning of the eighth day after birth the formal naming ceremony (su) takes place. As to all public gatherings, men and women come and go separately. The women, bringing food and flour, arrive in single file, senior women in front of junior in rank, and pass, eyes downcast, into the compound to the women's section. The ground millet flour allows the young wife to cook for her husband during the next few weeks without going through the arduous task of grinding millet. The women sit out in front of the hut of the mother chatting gaily and colouring their teeth, while the mother remains in her hut. The barber arrives to cut the face marks and remove the uvula of the child.

In front of the compound the men sit on either side of the entrance hut. On the left side (as you come out of the compound) a senior mallam, other mallams, and mallams-in-training, read the entire Koran by passing out several pages to each of the literates who have come for this purpose. On the right hand side of the entrance hut the men of the household sit on mats in order of seniority, with close friends or high status persons waiting patiently for the reading to finish and the name to be announced. All males usually contribute some money (two to five shillings varying up to one pound for high status visitors) as a token of friendship. The

861 We have never seen anyone hit a small child, but 158.

> the warnings are frequent. The "boogy-man" threat is more often used as a warning. For example, last month a group of travelling entertainers brought a very large, ugly hyena to town ... apparently Kachella gana was shown the thing from a distance, and ever since the hyena has been used as a deterrent to investigating the contents of medicine bottles, or venturing beyond the compound door. It works, although Kachella is inclined to laugh somewhat incredulously. (1)

Continuing with the same excerpt, it will be noticed that positive as well as negative learning is begun early and definite, patient teaching by socialising adults is a normal part of every day's activities for the young child:

> A plate of food is on the floor of the hut gathering flies. The grandmother says to her little adoptive grandson, "Kachella, pick the plate up. Now take it over there. Be careful, there is food on the plate. Now take that other plate and cover the food over (plates are made of grass). That's right, very good." The operation which would have taken the grandmother a second has been carried out only after two minutes of patient instruction to the child who could not yet speak more than a few words.

858

The inception of sex roles begins with the onset of child-
302 hood and the end of weaning. The boys are tada gana (small boys) and
[858] wear the appropriate small smock and begin to have their heads shaved
[602] in the child hair style of the father's agnatic group. This small boy's hair style often depicts the political affiliations of the father's agnatic group and/or its territorial origins. Thus all the household groups connected to a political leader or coming from a particular
[184] town may share the same small boy's hair style. Some lower class informants in the large urban centre stated that they used whatever hair style they pleased for their small boys when it was observed that no rule seemed to be followed.

858
302 After weaning, the girls are fero gana (small virgin girls)

(1) Excerpt from correspondence by Diana Cohen with the Institute of Child Study at the University of Toronto (1956).

858 or kála yaaku (three hands), the latter referring to the distinctive
• 302 three pronged hair style of pre-pubertal females. The young girls are soon more fancifully dressed and their eyelids blacked with antimony.

855 Until the age of three or four, children are kept for the
857 most part within the compound, going out only with older members. After four or five, the child begins to explore beyond the compound and meets children of his own sex in the immediate vicinity. These form peer groups who play together and gather together quickly to witness any excitement of the town. They stay away from groups of male elders who may sit conversing under a tree, but otherwise roam the town and later even the surrounding bush area freely as long as their growing amount of household tasks are complete.

868 The girls start to learn the intricacies of preparing food,
[412] carrying water, and the ever present task of grinding millet either on a quern or more commonly in a large wooden mortar. The boys begin to gather firewood, help with the farming, and the family dry season activity, as well as being on hand for running messages. Pressure in the acquisition of these skills is steady and slow but definite. Punishments are rare, but to a Western eye extremely severe. The reason is most often the continual or perhaps sudden relinquishing of a skill which by such time should have already been acquired. A young boy of ten was beaten for omitting to gather grass for his father's horse; this is a skill which boys of seven to nine should have already learned. The severity of the punishment is noted by all children within earshot. Thus the beating of one child in a village or a ward not only punishes his neglect of learned skills but advertises to all, within hearing distance of the child's screams, that punishment is not just a matter of threats but is an awesome, painful reality if limits are transgressed.

881 informants feel that it is better if a girl is married before she men-
582 struates and claim that religion prescribes this as the best kind of first marriage for a girl. Exceptions are, of course, quite common and not regarded as very bad as long as the girl is a "virgin" (i.e. 585 proven so on her wedding night). When she marries for the first time
[302] a girl does not automatically change her status. She is still considered a fero gana (a small girl) just as she was before marriage, and for some little time continues to wear her hair in the young girl style. As one informant put it:

[833] 881 [885] She knows nothing, she copulates yes, but takes no interest in such things, there is no pleasure in it for her. When she bleeds, then she is kamu kura (a mature woman) and she knows everything and will take pleasure from sexual intercourse. When the first blood comes the girl will feel shame and tell no one, only her close friends, who will tell her mother. Her mother will come and gather together her friends and relatives (female) and cook food and give sada'a (offerings to the poor).

885 [302] Sometime after the onset of menstruation the young girl changes her hair style to the typical and distinctive styling of the adult Kanuri woman. It is not necessary for her to become a completely different person immediately upon taking up the status of married woman. Indeed, she still retains many of her childhood friends. In a completely new locale she first obtains age-mate friends who are, as often as not, pre-pubertal children.

Over the first one or two years of marriage, young brides are more and more to be seen with the other adult women of the compound and the neighbourhood whose main activities and interests centre around marketing, cooking, obtaining water, gossiping and engaging in women's festivities. Less and less are they interested in playing and chatting with the young pre-pubertal children, whose activities become progressively remote from their own.

[p. 229]

Chapter VIII

Political Organisation

631 The political organization in Bornu can be seen as a continuum of power and authority running from small to large scale structures. These include the extended household organization, the hamlet and ward, the village area, the district, and finally the state, which today has a place in the Northern Region and the Federation of Nigeria. [648] In Bornu, each expansion of the scale of the organization includes part or all of the previous one, while cross-cutting the entire system and intersecting it with varying intensities at different levels is the colonial administration.

621 ### The Hamlet and the Ward

Within the point of view of the present discussion the basic unit of political structure is the extended household organization [571] with its head as the primary governmental figure. The processes of fission and fusion by which these units expand or contract within themselves has already been described (see above pp. 80 - 92).

571 There is however a larger scaled process of fission and fusion which
621 integrates that previously discussed with a wider political organization. This is the underlying process of Hamlet and Ward formation. The following examples illustrate this process in action.

[361] Approximately three miles south-west of Magumeri is the
[632] small village of Gworongo (pop. circa 250) which falls within the
[249] administrative jurisdiction of the town area of Magumeri. Surrounding
[276] the town are small plots of a specialized crop (gworongo)(1) which is sold
• [302] in the local markets along with tobacco flowers as a stimulant and a cosmetic for colouring women's teeth. In 1953 one of these full-time

(1) Solanacea Incanum

517 teming to court cases, horse racing, radio, phonographs, newspapers, political meetings, and cinema shows (in Maiduguri). Some of these items, both traditional and acquired as a result of culture contact, require expenditures. Thus praise-singing which validates status, or
511 [554] even creates it momentarily where it does not exist, may become almost a social narcotic when used by some highly motivated person who wishes to obtain higher status but cannot, and thus buys it in one or two minute lumps of time from the singers. Again sexual affairs (male speaking) for sheer pleasure can be a costly entertainment, especially if the [833] [524] man seeks variety. Other traditional items, such as gambling (now [517] done with European playing cards), learning to read the Koran, trips to other localities, visiting markets with no practical purpose, may [177] all lead easily to some expenditures. With growing culture contact and westernization we may expect that items such as radios, newspapers, and movies will begin entering family budgets, as they have already done for the urban population.

276 [273] The major traditional stimulants in Bornu are kola-nuts, millet beer and tobacco flowers for women. Kola-nuts are chewed almost universally by both sexes, and form part of leisure time intercourse. It is customary to have nuts at weddings, naming ceremonies
276 and other ritual occasions, which are given out to guests. Generally
511 speaking, expenditures reported by men for kola-nuts were low in comparison to food and clothing. However, in several cases - the District Head, the head butcher, a kola-nut retailer, a city trader, an N.A. messenger, an ex-cattle trader now a farmer, and a hides and skins trader, the calculated annual expense approached or equalled clothing expenditures. [302] Women colour their teeth with gwerongo (Salonacea Incanum) and chew tobacco flowers and kola-nuts, but generally obtain the income for

276 this expenditure from both their own productive activities as well as
302 the husband's allowance. Pagan millet beer, distilled millet liquor,
511
273 and European beer and spirits are widely consumed. Except for the
[511] District Head, who averaged £3.0.0 to £5.0.0 per month for liquor, little is known of this expenditure. It appears that it is a more widespread practice in larger centres and among the younger generation of Kanuri. Indeed it is rare to see an elderly person taking liquor in the
276 pagan quarter of Magumeri. Other minor stimulants are cigarettes, chew-
272 ing tobacco, tamarind juice, soft drinks and candies.

751 A different variety of stimulant, which involves almost
789 everyone in some expenditure, is a supernatural or medicinal one, in which the individual expects to be protected against malevolence and
[432] misfortune, and to achieve sexual, political and economic success. This type of stimulant comes traditionally from the native doctor or the specialized charm seller, each of whom sells items which stimulate greater success, or stave off failure along some dimension of aspiration.
789 In the culture contact situation, this has created a good market for
177 "patent medicines" which are beginning to appear in large quantities in the urban centre. Thus at Maiduguri, a European drug store sports such items as "Pregno" for pregnant women, "Braino" for students, "Backo" for anyone with back-aches, "Power" for anyone wishing to increase his personal fortunes, and so on. The recognized superiority of Western technology is generalized to its medicinal stimulants and these meet a sharp demand.

302 Cosmetics in Bornu are used by both sexes although more time, money and effort is spent in self-beautification by women. Both men and women use perfume, although only at the upper class level is it a daily practice. Perfume is always passed around at major ceremonies to both

302 sexes and constitutes one of the minor expenses to be reckoned with by
301 the ceremonial initiator. Men and women wear rings of silver or some other white metal and women also wear bracelets, anklets, hairpins, ear
302 plugs, and necklaces. Women darken their eyes with antimony, and colour their front teeth red. Males have their heads shaved by a barber once every two or three weeks, sometimes letting it go for an entire month. Women dress their hair every fifteen days. Female friends, relatives or neighbours dress one another's hair in turn. Men give their wives a regular allowance to cover the cost of hair dressing which includes expenditures for pomade, cloves, special needlelike objects for braiding and other materials that go into the elaborate confection of a Kanuri woman's hair styling. Men and women also (not universally) dye their hands and feet in indigo and henna respectively.

511 In the budget interviews the composite expenditure for ceremonials, entertainments, stimulants and cosmetics ranged between £3.0.0 to £12.0.0 (per annum) with one person lower (£2.0.0) and three higher (£15.0.0, £20.0.0 and £88.0.0) - those higher were two N.A. officials and a city trader; all, therefore, non-peasants. Taking the median point as our measure of central tendency, we can allow about £8.0.0 sterling for this category of consumption in the average (four person) rural household. This brings the calculated rural expenditure in cash value to £58.0.0 per household.

Operating Expenses

Operating costs are those expenditures which are not consumed for their own value as entertainment, or subsistence items, but are necessary expenses, which maintain the economic unit as a productive entity. In this category are such things as housing, tools, labour, land, transportation, taxes, fuel and seeds.

443 With one
[442] exception,[1] locally produced items such as medical services, pottery,
[438] meat, and so on, do not have a wholesale organization. Goods not produced locally involve some supra-local organization. This is true of things like salt, textiles, kola-nuts and manufactured goods. As a general rule, locally produced goods and services are retailed by their producers or their close relatives. Thus a lady making pots might send a daughter to market to sell; but a pottery woman was never observed selling her wares to a middleman who would in turn retail them. The data given above on Ka'anami, the calabash maker, is another example of this general rule.

438 On the other hand, retailers of goods not produced locally
442 must have some operating social relationships with a wholesale source of
443 supply. This wholesale supply relation may vary from a specifically
571 economic one to a much more diffuse superior/subordinate relationship. The primary modes of behavioral interaction for all these relationships are bərzum (discipline-respect) and aman (trust).[2] Some examples may help to illustrate this point.

(a) Momadu Mandama (Momadu, the salt seller)

438 Momadu, a man of about fifty-five to sixty years of age,
442 has lived in Magumeri for seven or eight years. He comes originally
443 from Hadejia (to the west of Bornu) where he began selling salt for a

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[824] (1) Gworongo, the plant used by women for staining their teeth is produced locally, but not in enough quantity in any one town to meet
[302] demand. Thus a few middlemen per market cycle collect the plants from producers and distribute them throughout the area covered by their own market cycles. They sell to both consumers and retailers.

(2) See above, pp. 57-68.